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UNICEF post-crisis transition strategy in support of the medium-term strategic plan

Summary

Crises continue to have devastating impacts on global development, and on the well-being of children and women in particular. With the increased recognition of the links among the Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals and post-crisis transition, the United Nations must address these challenges more effectively. Through its mandate, its country presence before, during and after crisis and its capacities to effectively advocate for and help address the rights and needs of children and women, UNICEF can significantly contribute to a sustainable post-crisis recovery process. For UNICEF, addressing the "gap" between relief and development does not necessarily mean that more needs to be done but rather that more needs to be done differently. UNICEF must adapt and strengthen its present-day post-crisis transition approaches, capacities and partnerships to accelerate development gains for women and children in crisis-affected countries. The present strategy paper outlines how UNICEF aims to contribute to transition strategies to produce results for children.

It is recommended that the Executive Board adopt the draft decision in part XIV.

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I. Introduction

1. Today, more than 60 countries are struggling through the aftermath of crisis or conflict, with serious consequences for women and children. Eighty-five per cent of the people exposed to the effects of natural disasters live in countries having either medium or low human development. And among the 32 countries in the lowest bracket of the 2005 Human Development Index, 22 have experienced conflict at some point since 1990.

2. The responsibilities of the United Nations have been expanded in recent post-crisis interventions. They are reflected in the outcome of the 2005 World Summit and the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office. They are present in the United Nations reform initiatives that align the humanitarian, development, political and security spheres in the form of United Nations Integrated Missions. The attention paid to post-crisis transitions following natural disasters has increased sharply in the past few years, in recognition of the profound damage natural disasters do to human development.

3. The interests of women and children must remain central to renewed efforts to assist countries and people recover from crises and to help to create the conditions for long-term stability, social equity and sustainable development.

II. Post-crisis transition, the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals

4. The Millennium Declaration and Security Council resolution 1318 (2000) endorse the central role of the United Nations system in maintaining international peace and security and call for the allocation of resources to the United Nations so that the organization can meet its responsibilities in conflict prevention, peaceful resolution of disputes, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction.

5. Similarly, the Millennium Declaration commits the United Nations to "intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters", calling for the development of early warning systems, vulnerability mapping, technology transfer and training, and for support to partnerships and the incorporation of risk-reduction into national Government planning.

6. Changes in the international aid environment also impact positively on the United Nations reform process, guided by the principles outlined in the Rome High-Level Forum on Harmonization (2003) and the Paris High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (2005). The United Nations development system, working in concert with national stakeholders and leadership of national authorities at the country level, can reinforce the work of UNICEF, allowing for more effective support to the Millennium Declaration and the child-focused and gender-sensitive Millennium Development Goals.

III. The challenge to be met

7. The Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals and the Plan of Action adopted by the General Assembly Special Session on Children in 2002 constitute a basic pillar of UNICEF present and future work in post-crisis transition.

8. Most countries in post-crisis transition are those of high priority for UNICEF: least developed or low income countries with high rates of mortality, malnutrition, illiteracy or illnesses affecting women and children. UNICEF regular programmes of cooperation in support of the Millennium Development Goals and the *World Fit for Children* goals remain therefore highly relevant in these countries, in normal times as well as post-crisis transition situations. This present strategy, then, does not propose a radical departure from the well-established programming approach of UNICEF.

9. Indeed, the first interventions of UNICEF took place in countries emerging from crisis following the end of World War II. The demonstrated experience and capacity of UNICEF coupled with its country presence before, during and after crisis, make the organization particularly well suited to continue addressing the needs of women and children in post-crisis transition in the 21st century.

10. As the Secretary-General observed in his "In Larger Freedom" report, "We will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights". As a lead advocate for children's rights, UNICEF is well placed to advocate and support initiatives in support of peace and security in post-conflict countries and to improve risk mitigation and recovery in post-natural disaster situations.

11. The enduring commitment of UNICEF to children's rights and its obligations under article 45 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child have led it to incorporate the Convention's principles into its work, including in transition situations. Child protection is encompassed within these principles, since it helps to ensure that the most vulnerable and marginalized children also enjoy their rights.

12. The Convention's principle of the child's rights to life, survival and development helps UNICEF and partners to identify which goals and actions to pursue. The principles of non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, participation and taking account of the views of the child guide how these goals and actions are pursued. Combined, they serve as the foundation for UNICEF support of the Millennium agenda and help sustain the results of collective efforts following a crisis and reach the Millennium Development Goals.

13. Addressing the gap between relief and development does not necessarily mean that more needs to be done but rather that more needs to be done differently. UNICEF, therefore, must adapt and strengthen its present-day post-crisis transition approaches, capacities and partnerships, to help ensure accelerated development gains for women and children in crisis-affected countries.

14. Meeting this challenge, through an approach that is shaped through UNICEF pro-active participation in United Nations reform and contributions to the strengthening of the United Nations system, and guided by the MTSP, represents the future of UNICEF programmes in post-crisis transition.

IV. The scope of the challenge

15. Between 1990 and 1999, 75 million children under age 15, more than 75 per cent of whom lived in developing countries, were affected by natural and man-made disasters.[1] Thirty of the 52 countries with child mortality rates that have stagnated or worsened have experienced conflict since 1990. Eight of the 10 countries with the lowest primary enrolment ratio have experienced conflict at some point since 1990.[2] And in each year between 1991 and 2000, 30,000 children died from natural disasters, with over 200,000 more children affected.[3] During armed conflicts, rape has been used as a weapon of war in many countries. More than 15,000 women and girls were raped in one year in Rwanda[4] and over a quarter million during the civil war in Sierra Leone.[5]

16. These statistics vividly illustrate the devastating effects of crisis on global development, and on the well-being of children and women in particular. UNICEF, as a member of the United Nations system, has an obligation to help mitigate the impact and repercussions of crisis, by assisting affected nations and their populations, especially children, in realizing a durable recovery.

V. UNICEF role and responsibility

17. The role and responsibility of UNICEF in post-crisis transition situations will continue to be founded on the Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The organization's endeavours will be backed up by strengthened evidence-based advocacy for children's rights, greater engagement in normative work and policy dialogue and predictable and reliable programme results for children.

18. UNICEF has a strong base that can help to support viable structures during a recovery process. The base encompasses an in-depth understanding of each country and its needs; strong relations with national and local government authorities and civil society organizations; and a systematic and rigorous approach to inter-sectoral programming and evidence-based advocacy.

19. In situations where existing capacities fall short or where the protection of humanitarian space remains necessary, a direct response to address children's needs remains a core responsibility of UNICEF. During a post-crisis transition phase, this responsibility often goes hand in hand with the need for increased efforts towards strengthening national ownership and institutional and capacity development as well as promoting a broad participation of national stakeholders in the recovery process. Despite the difficulties in accomplishing these objectives, for UNICEF they do not constitute "either or" challenges, but rather must both be addressed simultaneously.

20. In doing so, UNICEF will seek to incorporate the views and expectations of children and young people in its own work, as well as in that of national

[1] International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), *World Disasters Report 2001*.
[2] UNDP, *Human Development Report 2005*.
[3] IFRC, *World Disasters Report 2001*.
[4] UNICEF, "Equality, development and peace" (2000).
[5] UNICEF, "The impact of conflict on women and girls in West and Central Africa" (2005).

Governments and other partners. Only through the active participation of children and young people can their energies and potential as positive agents of change be harnessed to bring about lasting peace and sustainable development results.

VI. Post-crisis transition defined

21. In the aftermath of crisis, there is a period when humanitarian needs must still be met while long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction have yet to be fully realized — the post-crisis transition period.[6] Post-crisis transitions are characterized as such by shifting emphases, from saving lives to preventing the recurrence of crisis, and harnessing conditions for future development in a way that transforms as it repairs.

22. In defining the scope of post-crisis transition, UNICEF will focus on two categories of transition situations: post-conflict and post-natural disaster. Though prolonged complex emergencies or the complexities of so-called "fragile states" fall outside the scope of this strategy paper, it is understood that many of the ideas and proposals described in the paper can help further the UNICEF agenda in such situations.

A. Post-conflict situations

23. UNICEF recognizes that post-crisis transition is not a linear process from relief to development. Insecurity may persist, or even increase, and renewed violence remains a real possibility. Similarly, post-conflict countries may experience stability and progressive recovery in some parts of their territory, while other parts remain in a state of emergency.

24. What distinguishes post-crisis transition, then, from either the period of the crisis itself or the subsequent path of regular development is the emergence of real opportunities to consolidate peace and the specific mix of activities to be undertaken to sustain a country's return towards a state of "definitive recovery". Continued vulnerability, unmet basic needs and human rights concerns may, and often do, require further action, but with the end of a transition period a stage has been reached where the uncontrolled violence of the parties in conflict is no longer a logical pursuit, and the political, economic and social risks of further conflict are reduced to the point where regular development policies can take hold and be sustained. Depending on the specific country context and nature of the crisis, this may take anywhere from 5 to 15 years after the ostensible conclusion of a crisis.

B. Post-natural disaster situations

25. Depending on the severity of the disaster and the time it takes to garner additional, life-saving assets, the post-crisis transition period in post-natural disaster

[6] Both in the definition and practical application of post-conflict transition, it is the intention of UNICEF to conform with the current general understanding of the term, including as discussed in recent debates among ECOSOC members, the GA (2005 World Summit, TCPR), IASC and UNDG.

situations usually begins with the planning for early recovery, where possible and opportune, starting while the humanitarian response is still ongoing.

26. The end of the post-crisis transition period can be defined as when regular development interventions can again take hold and the basic needs of affected populations have largely been met. UNICEF recognizes that post-natural disaster transition periods are usually considerably shorter than post-conflict ones, although their duration depends on the magnitude of the disaster, and the national Government's ability to deploy its assets and capacities to take full ownership of managing the post-crisis transition process.

27. Post-natural disaster transitions provide an opportunity for incorporating disaster risk mitigation and preparedness into development planning. UNICEF will continue to work with its partners to further this agenda, in particular through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group for Early Recovery and its linkages to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, guided by the Hyogo Framework for Action, agreed in January 2005.

VII. Guiding principles

The UNICEF response to post-crisis transitions is guided by several principles described below.

A. Partnerships

28. Few factors will be as critical to the successful implementation of the strategy as the ability to build effective partnerships with national counterparts — State as well as non-State, and at national as well as local levels. In addition, partnerships are critical with key stakeholders in the international community, the United Nations system, international financial institutions, donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), women's and youth organizations, academia, the diaspora and the private sector.

29. Existing partnerships will need to be adapted and strengthened, and new ones developed, in ways that better suit the changing parameters for international development assistance, United Nations reform, the imperative of national ownership, the premium placed on advocacy and leveraging, and the need to continue to directly address women's and children's needs and build capacity where it falls short.

B. National ownership

30. National ownership is a fundamental attribute of robust post-crisis transition policy and programmes, just as it is a prerequisite for durable stability. National ownership through active participation by the governments, civil society and communities that form the State is essential to building consensus around post-recovery objectives and reinforcing local capacities. Advancing both of these objectives will be an integral part of UNICEF actions.

31. The notion of ownership also poses a particular challenge to post-crisis transition situations: how to strike the right balance between saving lives and relieving the immediate needs of the people while simultaneously assisting in building national capacities for service-delivery management and programme implementation. The response to this paradigm needs to be carefully calibrated to each specific country situation and take into account the important differences between post-conflict and post-natural disaster situations, as in the latter case, national capacities are usually significantly stronger.

32. As a matter of principle, UNICEF remains committed to fostering participation and strengthening national and local institutions, helping them manage the post-crisis transition process effectively, while recognizing that different forms of ownership and outcomes may develop differently over time.

C. Capacity development

33. National ownership cannot fully materialize if national actors and institutions responsible for a country's recovery process do not have the required capacities to manage and lead that process.

34. While UNICEF has made significant progress in capacity development, a more robust and holistic approach to capacity development has yet to be formulated and tested. A longer-term approach is required, extending beyond training and moving towards intensive and long-term engagement with national institutions. This engagement also requires support for the systems that generate and sustain sound development policies — policies that acknowledge, protect and promote the rights and well-being of children and women.

35. It is imperative to further develop UNICEF understanding and organizational and staff capacities in support of capacity development.

D. Bottom-up approach to programming

36. Fostering national ownership extends beyond the central government to include actors at all levels. UNICEF regards a bottom-up approach to programme design essential in fostering sustainable results-oriented solutions to delivery of goods and services for, and the empowerment of, vulnerable populations. The strong presence of UNICEF on the ground allows the organization to play a unique role in strengthening local capacities and linking them to the national centre of decision-making. Likewise, with its broad range of expertise, UNICEF can work across sectors and help to foster an integrated approach to recovery and reconstruction.

37. UNICEF participatory approaches and decentralized planning and programming, involving direct consultation with affected communities, will continue to support Governments to adopt and implement community-centred approaches. This approach includes support to local authorities to promote, supervise and guide planning and recovery processes. In this way, UNICEF can help to ensure the realization of a broader protective environment that places the child in her/his immediate environment, family and the community.

38. UNICEF has taken note of the recent evaluations of the tsunami response, which criticized the international community for not involving beneficiaries more in

recovery planning or in design of facilities. Special care will be taken to strengthen this aspect in UNICEF work.

E. Building back better

39. The basic premise of "building back better" is that following a crisis, new opportunities often emerge for change or reform of pre-existing policies, infrastructure and services. These opportunities can bring about accelerated developmental gains. Building back better places a premium on rehabilitation of services, systems and institutions through the application of improved standards, methods for rehabilitation, and policies, including, for example, in the area of birth registration.

40. The essence of building back better illustrates that much of the intervention in post-crisis transition situations is less a matter of "doing different things" but rather of "doing things differently". In education, building back better may mean rebuilding schools to a higher, child-friendly standard, creating environments that are clean, safe and inspiring for children.

41. Based in part on lessons learned from the post-tsunami recovery process as well as on experiences in other post-crisis transition countries, the basic principles of the building back better approach will be core elements throughout the programmatic interventions of UNICEF in both post-conflict as well as post-natural disaster transition situations. The approach will also guide UNICEF normative work and advocacy.

F. The participation of children and young people

42. In most post-crisis transition countries, over half of the population is younger than 25, frequently younger than 18. Well-informed strategies for post-crisis transition processes must therefore take account of young people and their views.

43. In the view of UNICEF, the active participation of children and young people — commensurate with their capacities and with special focus on the marginalized and vulnerable young people, including those with disabilities — should be standard practice in any recovery process.

G. Gender sensitivity

44. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security is a watershed political framework that makes women — and a gender perspective — relevant to negotiating peace agreements, peacekeeping operations and reconstructing war-torn societies. UNICEF will continue to advocate for, and practice in its own programmes, women's equal participation and involvement in recovery processes and will support women's efforts as powerful brokers for peace and rehabilitation.

45. UNICEF recognizes that maintaining gender sensitivity is not only an important goal in itself, but also, ultimately, an essential catalyst for the protection and well-being of children, including in post-crisis transition. During and after

conflict or natural disaster, women and young girls often end up bearing the larger burden of relief and reconstruction. They are usually the primary caretakers of family members affected by conflict or disaster. The vulnerability of girls and women to gender-based violence, especially sexual exploitation, trafficking and abuse, has often been overlooked.

46. UNICEF will apply and advocate for increased efforts towards disaggregation of gender data to ensure that post-crisis transition assistance plans take account of women's and girls' specific health, protection and security needs, and increase understanding of how proposed interventions may affect women and girls differently.

VIII. Post-crisis transition and the Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (CCCs)

A. Ensuring sustained commitments for survival and protection

47. The CCCs serve as the foundation for the organization's work in post-crisis transition and beyond. UNICEF must ensure that its minimum programme commitments in emergencies are met and sustained throughout the recovery process as well. The operational commitments of the CCCs are of equal importance and constitute an important base on which to build the required capacities for post-crisis transition.

48. Following a humanitarian crisis, special care is required to guarantee that children are protected. During the early stages of the post-crisis transition period, humanitarian needs often increase as changes in the security conditions allow better access to previously isolated areas and as population movements intensify. The obligations of UNICEF to assist in providing reliable, effective and timely humanitarian assistance thus continue during the post-crisis transition period.

B. The humanitarian response: ensuring assets for recovery

49. To ensure that its humanitarian response yields the resources needed for recovery, UNICEF must assure protective measures, policy support and advocacy from the very first days of a disaster, concurrently with urgent, life-saving humanitarian relief.

50. Awareness about issues can be a second asset for recovery, especially since the particular vulnerabilities of women and children are often spotlighted in a humanitarian emergency. The devastating impact of the tsunami on women and children, for example, prompted development partners to seek solutions to longstanding child-related problems, such as separation from primary caregivers, child abuse, exploitation and trafficking, including through the initiation of institutional and policy reform.

51. UNICEF is committed to applying the aforementioned principles throughout its post-crisis transition response and to ensuring that the results achieved through the effective implementation of the CCCs are sustained over the longer term.

IX. Post-crisis transition linked to the MTSP thematic focus areas

52. The concrete actions UNICEF commits itself to in post-crisis transitions are directly linked to the five MTSP focus areas and build upon the pre-existing post-crisis transition-related interventions identified in the MTSP's key results areas. UNICEF undertakings in recovery and post-crisis transition must be consistent with and complementary to its regular work.

53. Actions taken in post-crisis transitions — as organized below by focus area — fall into two categories: first, those projects and programmes that directly address children's and women's needs in post-crisis situations, and second, those that support normative work and knowledge management, policy formulation, capacity development and coordination.

54. Not all possible transition-related activities will be pursued in every post-crisis situation. Decisions on appropriate actions will be guided by nationally developed strategies for transition, based on the country-specific context, availability of resources and assessment of the most pressing priorities at that time.

A. Focus Area 1: Young child survival and development

55. UNICEF will help to restore enabling environments that lead to improved primary health care, mother/child and nutrition services, home-based management of childhood illnesses and immunization, and increased access to clean water and hygienic environments.

56. Early childhood development interventions present a window of opportunity to start (again) right and to do better in helping to empower communities and families affected by crises by supporting local organizations and the capacity-building of Governments and NGOs.

57. Post-crisis transition-specific activities (a) help to ensure full coverage of children in child-headed households and children of adolescent mothers in all health interventions, particularly immunization; (b) provide leadership for the nutrition and water and sanitation sectors and generally meet the expectation that UNICEF play a major role in these sectors, including through support to new Governments on policy, coordination and implementation; (c) help to ensure the standardized use of the early childhood development (ECD) kit in all post-crisis transition situations that require an ECD intervention; and (d) help fully to integrate the concept of ECD centres within child-friendly spaces, when appropriate in post-crisis transition situations, as vehicles for learning, play, parenting programmes and psychosocial support and counselling.

B. Focus Area 2: Basic education and gender equality

58. UNICEF will help to re-establish or sustain primary education, provide recreation and education kits, basic learning materials and teacher training, promote the resumption of quality educational activities equally for both boys and girls, address learning needs of adolescents, including over-age students in primary

schools, and contribute to post-emergency rehabilitation and improvement of education systems.

59. Every child's right to quality education must be safeguarded at all times. Education's unique, transformative potential offers an excellent vehicle for improving security, healing, social service provision, and reintegration following crises.

60. Back-to-school campaigns respond to the immediate need to restore education in post-crisis situations and at the same time incorporate a longer-term perspective. An evaluation of the UNICEF education response in emergencies and post-crisis transition is also built into the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan of the MTSP.

61. UNICEF is committed to helping ensure women's full participation in all stages of the peace process, including the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements as well as the drafting and negotiation of constitutions. It is critical that post-crisis transition interventions will also include direct assistance to girls and women who have been victims of violence or sexual exploitation.

62. Post-crisis transition-specific activities (a) set standards for construction of child-friendly schools and learning spaces that offer healthy, safe and protective environments for all children; (b) support education-policy development that promotes the quality and relevance of teaching, and the integrated provision of health, nutrition, water and sanitation services, and hygiene education at the school facility; (c) support policy development for free, compulsory basic education through back-to-school campaigns, with measures to offset tuition costs and regularize teacher salaries; (d) advocate for gender equity and equality, including special measures to ensure quality educational opportunities for girls; and (e) address the needs of over-age learners and demobilized children associated with armed groups to make up for years of lost education.

C. Focus Area 3: HIV/AIDS and children

63. UNICEF will help to ensure that HIV/AIDS systems and capacity are strengthened and that essential prevention, care, support and treatment services benefit pregnant women, children and adolescents in post-crisis situations.

64. Of the 45 priority countries identified by the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and its cosponsors as requiring technical support within the framework of the UNAIDS division of labour, at least half are affected by crisis or else are going through a post-crisis transition, host refugee or displaced people's populations or have other crisis-related concerns.

65. UNICEF support to HIV/AIDS interventions in post-crisis transition will be fully consistent with the "Unite for Children, Unite against Aids" campaign and its focus on the four P's (prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV, paediatric treatment, prevention of new infections, and protection and support for orphaned and vulnerable children).

66. In collaboration with partners, UNICEF will support the integration of quality care and support for children affected by HIV/AIDS into national and subnational policies, plans, basic services and all other undertakings related to post-crisis

transition interventions. The implementation of programmes will be made consistent with the process to clarify a United Nations system division of labour for technical support to assist countries in implementing their annual AIDS action plans, as promoted by the Global Task Team on Improving AIDS Coordination among Multilateral Institutions and International Donors.

67. UNICEF will also support national and subnational programmes to provide age-relevant, gender-sensitive information and education on sexual and reproductive health, parenthood, substance abuse, the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, as well as other evidence-based measures to reduce adolescent risk and vulnerability to HIV infection. This will involve balanced and comprehensive prevention strategies that promote abstinence, faithfulness, partner-number reduction and consistent condom use through life skills interventions that are school- and community-based; peer education and outreach; adolescent-friendly health services, voluntary and confidential counselling and testing, outreach and referral; and mass media and interpersonal communication interventions.

68. Post-crisis transition-specific activities (a) reduce adolescent risks and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS by increasing access to and use of gender-sensitive sexual and reproductive health prevention information, skills and services; (b) develop new technical guidance and updated technical notes on HIV/AIDS prevention and participation, based on the latest research and lessons learned; (c) advocate and build the capacity of partners and counterparts to integrate HIV-related emergency, reconstruction and security concerns into national AIDS plans; (d) advocate and build the capacity of partners and counterparts to integrate HIV/AIDS priority needs into post-crisis transition planning and funding appeals (including Consolidated Appeals); (e) advocate for the inclusion of essential HIV/AIDS services for children and adolescents, including in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes, in and out-of-school education and youth-friendly reproductive health services; (f) assume a leading role in the reconstruction of a comprehensive system of HIV/AIDS services for PMTCT, and care of and support to children and adolescents living with HIV/AIDS and children affected by HIV and AIDS; and (g) establish standing arrangements that facilitate appropriate linkages among UNICEF-supported HIV/AIDS programmes, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (United States), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Multi-Country HIV/AIDS Program grants of the World Bank, and other major funding instruments allocated for HIV in emergency, reconstruction and security settings.

D. Focus Area 4: Child protection

69. Measures to protect children from abuse, violence and exploitation in emergency contexts should continue throughout a post-crisis transition period. UNICEF will work with partners to help emergency-affected countries implement registration, tracing, interim care and reunion for separated children, as well as to establish child-friendly spaces and provision of psychosocial support.

70. Special care is needed to ensure that children and young people continue to be protected from abuse, violence and exploitation in the periods of post-crisis transition from relief to development.

71. Continued insecurity, high poverty rates, displacement, and lack of opportunities in post-conflict environments increase the risk of children coming into conflict with the law. It is important at this stage to put laws and capacity into place to steer children away from the criminal justice process and towards community support services, and to ensure the legal protection of children who become potential victims of or witnesses to the violation of their rights.

72. The period of post-crisis transition must not increase the threat to children of being separated from their primary caregivers. Special measures are required to prevent and respond to the risk of child trafficking and to protect child victims.

73. Post-crisis transition-specific activities (a) assess, and then create or strengthen, the mechanisms that protect children and women in emergencies, in partnership with government and civil society, during post-crisis transition; (b) raise awareness and strengthen advocacy to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation of children and women, and prevent recruitment, facilitate release, and advance the reintegration of children associated with armed groups; (c) help to ensure that demobilization and reintegration programmes include mine-risk-education components in all countries affected by mines and unexploded ordnance; (d) endeavour to see that caregivers always accompany unaccompanied minors, and where the child is head of household, that measures are taken to ensure children's equal access to return and reintegration services; and (e) help to ensure the provision of psychosocial support (PSS) for children recovering from separation, displacement and other disruptive impacts of conflict or natural disaster. Strategies to address PSS will build on the existing emergency coordination mechanisms such as the inter-agency group on separated and unaccompanied children and the IASC task force establishing guidelines for PSS response in emergencies, both of which include the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and NGO partners; (f) help to ensure that appropriate and targeted assistance is given to children with disabilities resulting from armed conflicts or natural disasters. Programmes of assistance should be inclusive of, and accessible to, children with disabilities; (g) where interim care centres have been established during conflict or natural disaster, tracing and family verification services should be provided to ensure successful reunification, backed by extended birth registration efforts; (h) advocate with all post-conflict countries for the respect of the rule of law and international child justice norms and standards, including the new United Nations guidelines on justice for child victims and child witnesses, where appropriate; and (i) help to ensure that when children themselves have been accused of perpetrating crimes during armed conflict, international and national justice and accountability mechanisms take into full account the protection needs of children in accordance with international norms and the principle of the best interests of the child.

E. Focus Area 5: Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights

Evidence-based advocacy

74. Building on the organization's demonstrated technical edge and capacities in situation analysis, communication and work with the media, UNICEF should play a stronger advocacy role in policy issues affecting children in post-crisis transition.

This strengthened role will enhance the organization's voice in post-crisis transition policy dialogue, lend UNICEF credibility as a lead advocate for children and prepare it well for the changes that are under way in United Nations reform.

75. UNICEF leadership on behalf of children is enhanced by the strength and integrity of its normative work, including assessments, analyses, and socio-economic policy development. UNICEF helps to strengthen national data systems, including through the use of *DevInfo*.

76. UNICEF is further committed to undertaking rigorous and systematic assessments of its work in post-crisis transition situations and to documenting its experiences and lessons learned to ensure replication of good practices.

Participation of young people and children

77. UNICEF supports partners in enabling the opinions and views of girls and boys to be taken into account, including through targeted surveying and their active participation in the creation and implementation of policies and programmes that affect their lives.

78. The participation of children and young people is important for their protection and development in situations of crisis and post-crisis, and for realizing the positive contribution children and young people can make to the reconciliation and reconstruction of their communities. Adolescents can be involved in a range of programme activities, including peer education, provision of services, media and advocacy, sports, HIV/AIDS awareness, truth- and justice-seeking, DDR, as well as in "future search" consultation, assessments and research.

Partnerships

79. **United Nations system**. UNICEF is fully engaged in preparations for the operationalization of the constituent bodies of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as the implementation of various Integrated Missions. UNICEF is exploring possible options for a staff secondment to the Peacebuilding Support Office and/or the Peacebuilding Fund. Through the United Nations country team (UNCT), UNICEF fully engages with and supports the anticipated operationalization of the Peacebuilding Commission at the country level, including through partnerships with the Commission's country-specific constituent members such as regional bodies, troop-contributing countries, donors and others.

80. UNICEF continues to strengthen existing partnerships within the context of the Integrated Missions initiative, as currently illustrated in the organization's membership in the Integrated Mission Planning Process Task Force, as well as its staff secondment to the Task Team and its participation in several working groups in preparation for the possible integrated mission in Darfur. This engagement at headquarters level is mirrored at the country level, for example through the provision of strengthened capacity for the Office of the United Nations Executive Representative in Sierra Leone and support to the Integrated Missions district deployment in that country.

81. UNICEF is committed to supporting the Resident Coordinator system in periods of post-crisis transition. Further options are being explored as part of the recently initiated review of the Resident Coordinator system capacity requirements

in post-crisis transition situations, facilitated by the United Nations Development Group Office.

82. Within the context of the new IASC Cluster Leadership initiative, UNICEF is actively engaged in the Early Recovery Cluster, led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Through its sub-leadership role for the Early Recovery Cluster's response in the area of social service delivery, UNICEF aims to establish more transparent accountabilities and better coordinated interventions, in turn increasing the collective ability of the United Nations and participating NGOs (including the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) to improve the timeliness and predictability of an early recovery response.

83. In the area of landmines and unexploded ordnance, UNICEF works in partnership with the United Nations Mine Action Service and other United Nations agencies to reduce the threat of landmines, with specific responsibilities for mine-risk education and support of victim assistance and advocacy.

84. Building on the joint work of UNICEF with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG)/Executive Committee on Humanitarian Assistance (ECHA) Working Group on Transition Issues, a framework has been established to incorporate the Working Group's guidance materials and tools within the programmatic and policy leverage capacity of UNICEF, in particular at the country level. This work is complemented by the continued participation of UNICEF in the Executive Committee on Peace and Security and its current chair function of the framework team.

85. These efforts will help UNICEF to better align its work with that of its national and international partners and strengthen joint analysis and post-crisis needs assessments, improvement of early warning mechanisms, emerging post-crisis transition financing mechanisms, and the development of shared workplans and post-crisis transition appeals.

86. **International financial institutions (IFIs)**. Commensurate with the common programme goals represented in the Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals and the common programme frameworks of poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), UNICEF and the IFIs, including the World Bank, are working more closely together. Collaboration has further increased with the launch of larger grant facilities through the International Development Association. The World Bank's Low-Income Countries Under Stress initiative has provided impetus for the seeking of common approaches to policy development and programme interventions in post-crisis countries, particularly in the area of social service delivery. Contacts have been established with the World Bank Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit and Low-Income Countries Under Stress initiative to explore opportunities for joint collaboration.

87. A second avenue for increased collaboration is shaped through mutual participation in post-crisis needs assessments, recently jointly reviewed by the United Nations and the World Bank. The continued participation of UNICEF and its sector lead responsibilities in post-crisis needs assessment will provide opportunities for extensive dialogue and leveraging of policy reform and resources in sectors beyond social-service delivery, including gender, HIV/AIDS, life-skills for young people or DDR.

88. UNICEF continues to invest in and build upon its existing relationships with the World Bank and other IFIs during the strategy's roll-out. Such partnerships strengthen common frameworks for policy development and programme interventions benefiting children at the country level.

89. **NGOs and civil society**. UNICEF work is enhanced by its partnerships with local civil society and NGO partners, which cover programme implementation, fact-finding and analysis, communication and advocacy, as well as the building of confidence and trust with local populations.

90. NGOs and civil society help to provide transparency to the recovery process, informing the public and conveying the reality of improved service delivery by Governments to their constituencies. Through investment in civil society, local capacities can be rebuilt and strengthened, allowing for the meaningful participation of local entities in defining existing needs and thereby taking ownership of proposed solutions. The involvement of the diasporas can help as well, particularly in capacity development.

91. UNICEF continues to enhance civil society and NGO partnerships to strengthen its ability to support national coordination and a nationally led recovery process. UNICEF can also act as a bridge between Government and NGO and civil society partners because of its convening and facilitation capacity, focused on knowledge-sharing and sector priority-setting.

92. **Specialized partnerships for peace-building, disaster-risk mitigation and post-crisis recovery**. To strengthen its knowledge base, capacity and results, UNICEF is expanding its partnerships, including with NGOs, research institutes and academia that have a track record of applied research, policy development and mediation capacity related to peace-building, disaster-risk mitigation and post-crisis recovery processes in post-crisis transition countries.

93. Another important area of partnership development is the international and national corporate sector. UNICEF is further developing these partnerships, building on past results in humanitarian crises. UNICEF also recognizes the important role of the military and the assets it can bring to bear, particularly during a humanitarian and early recovery response.

94. UNICEF has worked closely with UNHCR, UNDP and other stakeholders involved in the implementation of the "4R" initiative (repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction). Based on the conclusions of a recently completed review of results to date, UNICEF is assessing adjustments required and remains committed to substantive engagement in this initiative.

X. Programme guidance and tools

95. To fully realize a results-based management approach in post-crisis transition situations, UNICEF staff will need to understand the rapidly expanding body of inter-agency programme guidance and tools tailored to such situations. Where relevant, UNICEF will incorporate these products into its own resources and training material.

96. Training and issuance of new guidance will be targeted, as a matter of first priority, to staff based in selected post-crisis transition countries with large-scale

UNICEF programmes, countries with ongoing UNDG support to UNCTs, countries selected for deployment of Integrated Missions, initial roll-out countries of the IASC Cluster Leadership Initiative and countries subject to the attention of the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office.

XI. Resource mobilization and donor support

97. Coordination with donors is central to success in post-crisis transition. UNICEF donor partnerships build upon the already-established principles of the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative. A recent example of this can be found in UNICEF participation in the Sudan pooled-funding mechanisms.

98. Through its integrated approach to sector programming and coordination and strong country and sector knowledge base, UNICEF can make important contributions to the donors' work in-country through informing and fostering a policy dialogue among donors, beneficiary Governments and implementing partners.

99. UNICEF can help to inform donors' strategic choices and objectives regarding the determination of funding priorities or implementation modalities, the organization's ability in this area founded on its normative work and extended partnership networks in countries. To make UNICEF experiences and lessons learned in post-crisis transition situations more accessible to its donor partners, UNICEF will continue to engage with donors, including through the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Network.

XII. Financing mechanisms and leveraging of resources

100. Donors and aid agencies alike recognize a "financial gap" between relief and development that diminishes the efficacy of post-crisis recovery and reconstruction programmes.

101. Multi-donor trust funds (MDTFs) are increasingly used to manage sizeable aid flows to countries in post-crisis transition. UNICEF is evolving its corporate position on MDTFs in the larger context of the variety of funds that support post-crisis transition programmes, including other pooled-funding mechanisms, in addition to Global Funds, Consolidated Appeals, extended Flash Appeals or Transition Appeals.

102. The Peacebuilding Fund is being established to serve as the financial support basis for interventions initiated by the nascent Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office. The Fund is expected to play a targeted and catalytic role, closely aligned with other types of financing instruments for early recovery interventions.

103. These new financial mechanisms are important to UNICEF because they provide an opportunity to influence policy and programme decisions that affect women and children in the long term, and to build effective partnerships in pursuit of common goals.

XIII. Strengthening UNICEF capacity

104. UNICEF is committed to enhancing its capacity to translate the post-crisis transition strategy into action to produce results for children. UNICEF will continue to identify areas that need adaptation and strengthening.

105. The successful implementation of this post-crisis transition strategy depends on the policies and actions adopted by key actors with whom UNICEF works, which exist outside the organization's direct sphere of influence. Certain assumptions are made, which if unfulfilled, are likely to impair the post-crisis transition strategy roll-out. One assumption is that the Peacebuilding Commission and its constituent bodies will become fully operational and function as originally intended. The same assumption applies to the Integrated Missions concept and the IASC Cluster Leadership Initiative.

106. The ultimate responsibility for addressing children's needs and well-being rests with the national authorities concerned. The policies they adopt and the actions they take will determine the final results for children.

A. Management and coordination

107. A Transition Unit has been established within the Regional and Inter-Agency Affairs Section in Programme Division, to oversee and coordinate the strategy's effectiveness. This unit works in close collaboration with other relevant divisions, the Office of Emergency Programmes in particular, through the newly initiated Transition Task force. This post-crisis transition strategy is being implemented in conformity with the existing accountabilities and support structures of headquarters and regional and country offices.

B. Human resources

108. Training and guidance for country programming is being closely tied to the Millennium Development Goals and the MTSP. This work involves incorporating existing guidance materials and training modules recently developed by the UNDG Working Group on Transition into UNICEF programming tools and resources. Additional guidance and training materials will be developed in close collaboration with partners.

109. The following areas of programme guidance and training have been prioritized for the first stage of the strategy's roll-out in post-crisis transition situations: (a) measuring results; (b) conflict analysis; (c) applying the human rights-based approach to programming and integrating gender equality in post-crisis transitions; (d) post-crisis joint needs assessments; (e) MDTFs and other post-crisis transition financing mechanisms; (f) developing a (bridging) Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework, Annual Workplan and other inter-agency programming frameworks in post-crisis transition situations; (g) 'building back better' principles, policies and programme approaches; (h) the participation of children and young people in surveys and young people's participation in post-crisis transition; and (i) working in an integrated mission environment.

110. Where further strengthening of existing human resources capacity is required, priority is being given to areas of UNICEF sectoral responsibility in-country, including capacity development and the leveraging of socio-economic policies and resources affecting children and young people.

111. UNICEF will strengthen staff capacity to participate fully in post-crisis needs assessments, early recovery and/or United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team assessment missions following a natural disaster. The evaluation of the tsunami response as well as experience in other post-crisis transition countries have pointed to the need to quicken UNICEF deployment of additional needed staff.

112. At headquarters, UNICEF is exploring possible staff secondment to the Peacebuilding Support Office and/or Peacebuilding Fund.

113. UNICEF welcomes the increased engagement by Member States in the course of the strategy's implementation, and is willing to establish new Junior Professional Officer positions in several of its regional/country offices or headquarters, specifically assigned with responsibilities in this area.

C. Financial resources

114. UNICEF will contribute to the post-crisis situation and peace-building agenda by making a catalytic investment from existing regular resources funding to strengthen internal capacities for management and support of the strategy's roll-out. Additional resource requirements, will be sought from other resources.

115. As most post-crisis transition countries are already a high priority for UNICEF cooperation — because they are least-developed, low-income or high mortality countries — the UNICEF standard country programming process accords them relatively high levels of funding support.

116. At this stage, UNICEF will not seek to develop a separate funding stream for post-crisis transition purposes. However, other resources requirements could be reorganized at the country level to address capacity issues, taking into account alternative opportunities for capacity strengthening through partnership arrangements.

D. Monitoring and evaluation

117. UNICEF will create models for evaluating operations in post-crisis transitions to improve accountability and allow best practices to be incorporated organization-wide.

118. One such model already in place is the country programme evaluation (CPE). CPEs are tailored specifically for use in country programmes that need to alter direction, making this form of evaluation a logical tool for post-crisis transition programme design. The use of CPEs in post-crisis transition situations may directly contribute to national evaluation capacity and help to promote cooperation among UNICEF partners in identifying or further developing joint evaluation modalities.

E. Knowledge management and reporting

119. The implementation of the post-crisis transition strategy will complement the establishment of appropriate monitoring systems to measure impact and effectiveness. Mechanisms at the country office level are already in place to track and report on the situation of women and children. UNICEF will adapt existing benchmarks and indicators in its regular development programmes for the effective measurement and impact analysis of post-crisis recovery and reconstruction programmes. These will be linked to the new project and programme coding system and will be reported on in the organization's annual reports.

120. Further investments are required in the systematic identification and documentation of past lessons learned and good practices. UNICEF will initiate a systematic review of past experiences and lessons learned in post-crisis transition situations globally and establish a mechanism for their continued identification and dissemination. A continuously updated resource package for the planning, implementation and monitoring of UNICEF interventions in post-crisis countries will be made available globally.

121. This post-crisis transition strategy will be subject to review and adjusted to reflect experience and periodic evaluations of UNICEF programmes in post-crisis transition settings.

XIV. Draft decision

122. It is recommended that the Executive Board adopt the following draft decision:

The Executive Board

Endorses the "UNICEF post-crisis transition strategy in support of the medium-term strategic plan" (E/ICEF/2006/17) as the UNICEF strategy document for its programmes in post-crisis transition situations.